

THE SARAKATSANI OF ZAGORI

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2. THE SARAKATSANI OF ZAGORI

The community of Sarakatsan shepherds which I describe in this study numbers about 4,000 souls.¹⁸ In summer they are found in Zagori, a mountainous district north-east of the town of Jannina on the western limits of the Pindus range in the province of Epirus. Here they graze their sheep and goats from May until the early days of November; or as they would calculate it, between the feast-days of St. George and St. Demetrius which mark their seasonal migrations between plain and mountain (and are celebrated according to the old Julian calendar, that is, on the 6th May and the 8th November by the new calendar). In each Zagori village with high grasslands there is a local gathering of Sarakatsan families which exploit the grazing land of the community and add to it a summer population of 100-300 men, women, and children. Since 1938 the majority of these shepherd families have enjoyed the same citizenship and grazing rights as the sedentary villagers of Zagori from whom previously they had to rent their pastures. There are 152,000 sheep and goats in the Zagori of which 85,000 sheep and 13,000 goats belong to the Sarakatsani.¹⁹ Although the eastern villages of the district are Koutsovlach in speech and sentiment very few of their inhabitants are, any longer, transhumant shepherds, and the pastures of these villages are used by the Sarakatsani, who indeed occupy almost all the higher pastures of the district, grazing their flocks on the lands of 30 of the 43 villages which today constitute Zagori; the remaining villages are low lying (where it is easier to keep animals throughout the year), or they are without extensive areas of grass.

In the winter the community is more widely dispersed. The Sarakatsani move down from the mountains to the coastal plains and valleys over an area which extends from the Albanian frontier as far south as the towns of Arta and Preveza and even beyond.

¹⁸ There are no census details for the Sarakatsani as such. And police restriction on my movements prevented me from carrying out a complete survey of all the sheep villages in Zagori. However, on the basis of my own incomplete figures and information supplied by the Ministry of Agriculture for pastoralism in Zagori generally, this figure is most unlikely to be far from the truth.

¹⁹ Thus there are 24.5 sheep and goats per head of population among the Zagori Sarakatsani.

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8 HISTORICAL & GEOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION

619 beyond. Here many of the shepherds have no grazing rights and
 221 they must rent pasture sometimes at great cost from village
 [177] communities or private individuals. Since the first world war
 the settlement of refugees and more intensive farming tech-
 niques have progressively reduced the area of grassland in the
 plains. Each year the search for winter grass by the Sarakatsani
 becomes wider and more desperate. But quite apart from the
 [577] greater geographical dispersion of the community in winter, the
 problems of weather and lambing isolate the shepherds of each
 flock whose only concern during these months is the care of their
 animals. In summer, although the Sarakatsani are still dispersed
 [579] over 390 square miles of mountainous country, there is time to
 visit kinsmen who live at a distance, weddings and festivals are
 celebrated, and in general there is a greater awareness of the com-
 munity and its life. Winter in the plains is a kind of exile; the
 [223] return in spring to the mountains of Zagori is the return home.

619 The pattern of social groupings in this community is ex-
 543 tremely simple. The most restricted unit is the most important.
 This is the family, whether in its elementary or extended form.
 To this small group the individual owes almost exclusively his
 494 or her time, energy, and loyalties. However, the family group is
 593 normally unable to manage its flocks without some assistance
 from outside and, in these circumstances, two, three, or more
 families related by kinship or marriage, associate to form 'a
 company' (παρέα), or stani (στάνη)²⁶, which for functional rea-
 sons must include at least four adult males and generally
 numbers between 15 and 50 persons of all ages. But the duties
 which the individual assumes as a member of the 'company' are
 specific and have an obvious relation to the welfare of his family.
 The relationship between the constituent families of the group
 is contractual; any family may elect to leave the association
 whenever it wills, any family may be expelled by the decision of
 [577] the other members. Apart from this participation in a group of
 co-operating and related families, the shepherd normally has
 no membership in other social groupings which might conflict
 with his exclusive duties to the family.

²⁶ I shall employ these terms interchangeably, generally using 'company' when the emphasis is on the relations of co-operation between the constituent families of the group, and 'stani' when the context refers to the undifferentiated group with its huts, flocks, and grazing land.

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It is believed by the Sarakatsani that the interests of unrelated families are opposed and, indeed, mutually destructive. The local gathering of families which in summer happen to graze the pastures and enjoy citizenship rights of the same village, has little cohesion as a group except when on a rare occasion, such as a village festival, it breaks into brief and violent opposition to the villagers; and it has no organization beyond the ephemeral political combinations which appear at the time of local village elections. The idea of the total community is, of course, important; it represents a way of life in opposition to the ways of peasants, merchants, and bureaucrats. But the community, too, lacks any structure of authority or effective organization; and, in part, for the same reasons, that is to say the solidarity, exclusiveness, and mutual opposition of the families which form it.

While it is true that the total community (or the local gathering of families as a segment of it) is not an organized social group, it nevertheless defines a social space within which values are shared and the conduct of men and women is evaluated by other Sarakatsani. These values concern, especially, right ways of acting in family and kinship roles and the sex-linked moral characteristics which a man or woman ought to exhibit when he, or she, stands forward as the protagonist of the family and the guardian of its honour. Such evaluations imply a hierarchy of prestige. And it is precisely through mutual competition in terms of strength, wealth, and a reputation for honour, that the opposed families, and groups of related families, are associated with one another in a coherent and regular manner.

To these general features of the community it is necessary to add a brief consideration of particular geographical and historical factors which help to explain the presence of the Sarakatsani in the Zagori. Geographically Zagori is the western flank of the Pindus range immediately north of the approaches to the Metsovo pass, which forms its southern boundary; the mountain Mitsikeli is its western limit, and the sweep of the river Aóös contains it from the east and the north. The ridges of the Pindus, which effectively separate the eastern and western coastal plains of continental Greece, run in a north-west to south-east direction. The vast pressures which created these folds came from the east so that the escarpments present extremely abrupt

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consequences. It instructed that the names of semi-nomad shepherds should be added to the citizenship roll of either the summer or the winter village of their grazing grounds. A majority of the Sarakatsani with grazing in the western and central Zagori elected to write their names on the roll of their summer village.¹⁴ The purpose of the central government was to control an untidy and potentially disorderly element in a state based on the village community of settled peasantry. However, the proud villagers of Zagori with their inherited pretensions were deeply dismayed at this act of arbitrary legislation. While their own youth left for the town and city, rights of citizenship in the villages were by law extended to uncivilized and uneducated shepherds. Traditionally the Sarakatsani had built their summer huts on the grazing land they leased. But now possessing the rights of village citizenship, some bought houses in the depopulated village and others began to build their groups of huts on its outskirts. Daily contact between the two communities in these circumstances intensified their traditional antipathy. Yet at the same time the newly acquired local voting rights necessarily integrated the Sarakatsani into the village patronage system, and the villagers' attitude of open contempt forced them slowly but certainly to a growing conformity with village habits at least in their more outward and material aspects.

There were also important changes in the forms of co-operation between families within the community. Previously the grazing of areas carrying two or three thousand sheep had been sold each year by Zagori villages to the leading families of Sarakatsani. For these alone had the wealth and experience to carry through the negotiation. Through the lease of this grazing, the head of such a family, the tselingas (τσέλιγγας), also controlled a number of other families who contracted to work with him for the summer or winter period. The nucleus of the group was co-operating families (συλγτες) often related by kinship or marriage; but a number of unrelated men with few or no animals of their own were also associated as wage shepherds.

¹⁴ However, a village could resist the application if it was able to show that grazing land was not available. Since the pressure on grazing land was greater in the plains, Sarakatsani often had no other choice but to apply for citizenship in a mountain village.

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relieved from the various pressures that the tselingas had previously been able to apply, and now entitled to secure grazing rights, were able gradually to increase their flocks or, if they were wage shepherds, to build up a small flock that had not previously existed. At the same time the impossibility of finding considerable tracts of winter grazing forced the rich tselingas to reduce the size of his flocks below the formerly modest limit of a thousand. The conjunction of these trends has led to a more even distribution of wealth in the community.

I have indicated some of the geographical and historical conditions that help to explain the presence of the Sarakatsani in Zagori. And I have referred to more recent developments that have introduced important changes in the internal structure of the community and in its relation to the outside world. But these general considerations also emphasize the inherent vulnerability of a transhumant shepherd community in a society of settled villages. Historically, and still today, the village is the important political and social unit in rural Greece. Its elected officials are used by the Greek Government in many matters (as they were by the Ottomans) as the final link in the bureaucratic hierarchy. They are a channel of government and a channel of patronage. Yet many of the Sarakatsani of Zagori still have no secure political rights in the plains where their difficulties are greatest. There, many stand outside the political body of the village, membership of which would grant them each year the right on which their survival as a community depends, the right to graze.

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KINSMEN AND AFFINES

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The family is, indeed, the centre of the shepherd's world. Inside its limits he finds support, affection, and a sense of moral obligation. With certain qualifications these attitudes are extended to all the relations of the kindred. But outside the family and the kindred a man meets and expects only hostility and suspicion. There are conventions of conduct, but there is no general conscience of obligation to others. From the point of view of each individual, the community is divided into those who are kinsmen, a man's own people (*δουοί*), and those who are not kinsmen, that is strangers (*ξένοι*). There is a third intermediate category of persons, the affines (*συμπέθεροι*), strangers with whom a man or his kinsman has become related through a contract of marriage. Confidence, trust, and an altruistic concern about another individual's welfare can only exist between kinsmen, and it is only in a kinship relationship that a man is able to abandon the outlook of self-interest which normally guides him in relations outside the family.

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It follows that a man looks towards his kinsmen for practical support. As we have seen, unrelated families are mutually opposed. The family, with reference to which the individual must act in almost all contexts of behaviour, faces a hostile community. Therefore this support is peculiarly important. Yet, in relation to the community's population of about 4,000 souls, the average size of an individual's kindred is small, seldom exceeding 250 men, women, and children of whom some 160 will be second cousins, a category of relations who are on the margin of kinship. Kinsmen are relatively few and correspondingly precious. In summer the kindred is scattered over 390 square miles of difficult and tortuous country, and a man does not, generally, live within an hour's walk of more than one-fifth of his kinsmen. This, in part, is the practical importance of kinship connexions; they offer a certain freedom of social manoeuvre. Kinsmen established at strategic points through a community, which is numerically not small and geographically very dispersed, are able to offer hospitality and local information which pride and distrust prevent a man asking of unrelated persons. The network of a man's kinship relations provides him with a system of information and intelligence without which he cannot conduct his affairs efficiently or profitably. The price that he should ask for his milk, his wool, and animals for

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4. EXPRESSIONS OF SOLIDARITY

519 The Zagori community of Sarakatsani is geographically dis-
 612 persed for reasons which are mainly ecological. Patrilocal
 [581] marriage, suspicion of affines who live near the same village,
 yet the need for strategic alliances in other parts of Zagori, are
 factors which lead men to look for brides in a distant neigh-
 bourhood. Consequently the kindred of any individual tends
 to be more or less congruent with the boundaries of the com-
 munity itself, in the sense that a shepherd generally has at least
 527 a few relatives in any quarter of the Zagori. For these reasons the
 612 few festive occasions during the year which bring distant kins-
 591 men together are looked forward to with some anticipation.
 This is so not only for the utilitarian consideration that it is
 valuable to renew associations with kinsmen whose practical
 help may be required in the future, but simply for the company
 of people who value a man and return his affections. It is an
 aspect of the constant yearning for unity in a society which is, in
 [183] fact, fragmented by exclusive familial loyalties. It might be said
 that these occasions when kinsmen meet are important because
 in the atmosphere of festival excitement the sentiments of kin-
 ship solidarity are strengthened and recreated. At weddings, for
 585 example, quarrels almost always develop between unrelated
 527 guests, and the kinsmen who rush to the aid of their own people
 612 are giving a dramatized expression to the ideal of kinship
 [572] solidarity. But, if it is true that the gathering of dispersed kins-
 folk is an occasion for the restatement of kinship values, it is
 also true that it is the sentiment of kinship which invokes the
 gathering at all. Thus, although wedding invitations are sent
 out to all consanguineal and to a large number of affinal rela-
 tives, not all of the more distantly related of these persons will
 attend, and it is always recognized that whether or not an in-
 vited kinsman comes to the wedding is an indication of the
 effective solidarity, or absence of solidarity, between the invited
 man's family and the family of the groom or bride. Naturally
 the whole of the kinsman's family cannot attend a wedding to-
 gether. The demands of shepherding prevent this. But one
 member at least is expected to go as a representative.

612 A man, of course, may visit a kinsman at any time; in his
 574 huts he will always find shelter and hospitality for the night.

SOME STRUCTURAL IMPLICATIONS

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they are also an important incidental factor in support of the community's values; because, if men do not conform to these, they and their close kinsmen will not make honourable marriages. What sets men apart in one set of circumstances, tends to unite them in another.

The characteristic ambivalence of affinal relations has analogous consequences in terms of the spatial distribution of kinsmen. The Sarakatsani do not approve of marriages between families who live in the same village neighbourhood. For instance, the marriage of Demetrios Ferendinos to the sister of George Balatsos is the only case in his summer village. It is significant that this alliance provides us with an example of friction between affines. The Sarakatsani tell one that 'affines quarrel easily' (πιάνονται εύκολα οι συµπθέροι). It is particularly dangerous if the bride is able to run to her parents and brothers with tales of ill-treatment, and gossip about what goes on inside her husband's family. Not only is it safer to keep affines at a distance, but in another neighbourhood they may sometimes be of practical use. Marriages which are arranged between families in different neighbourhoods tend to produce individual kindreds which are dispersed and whose geographical 'boundaries' are roughly congruent with the boundaries of the community itself. A man through his scattered kindred and affinal relations participates vicariously in the life of the community of the Zagori Sarakatsani. If he has a kinsman or affine in a distant neighbourhood, he is interested in its local affairs, for these affect his relative whose interests are a matter of sympathetic concern to him and in certain circumstances may affect his own prestige. Therefore distrust of affines leads to the practice of taking a bride from another, preferably a distant, neighbourhood; this is one factor in the wide dispersion of individual kindreds in the community; and, in turn, this dispersion of recognized kinship ties increases the individual's consciousness of participation and membership in the total community.

These, then, are instances where marriage regulations or conventional attitudes about affines lead to a certain distance, between kinsmen in the first instance, between affines in the second, but in their further consequences encourage a wider synthesis; in the one case, in terms of conformity to the values

582 of the community and the constant proliferation, through
 602 marriages, of new relationships between opposed families;
 612 and in the other, a moral participation in the affairs of the
 619 different local segments of the geographically dispersed community. In both cases these considerations depend ultimately on the simple fact that 'kinsmen' and 'strangers' represent opposed but complementary categories of persons.

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602 This completes the discussion of the general characteristics
 612 of Sarakatsan kinship and marriage. Naturally the consequent system of personal relations has various implications beyond the field of kinship behaviour. Here I will indicate only one of these, but one that is peculiarly characteristic of Greek society and will continue to concern us in the chapters that follow.

59 As we have seen, the community from the viewpoint of each
 602 individual is divided into kinsmen and non-kinsmen, 'own
 612 people' and 'strangers'. The division is unequivocal; kinsmen
 571 inspire loyalty and obligation, strangers distrust and moral indifference. Yet within the category of kinsmen itself the only stable solidary group is the family. Plainly, the nature of the physical and social environment is such that it forces this small group, however it may value the ideal of autarky, to cultivate both intensively and extensively the support of kinsmen and affines. But for reasons inherent in the structure of the kindred, which it has been my purpose in this and the three preceding chapters to analyse, that support is contingent upon a kinsman's prior commitments to his own family. Thus the family emerges as a social isolate in two associated respects. In the first case, families unrelated by kinship admit virtually no moral obligation towards one another; in the second, families related by kinship nevertheless owe only conditional services. In a community where social relations are marked by such radical discontinuities it follows that the primary values are necessarily particularistic. The mutual opposition of family groups is expressed through the concept of honour with its connotations of exclusiveness, not the morality of universal values such as honesty or fair dealing. And Christian virtues such as humility, meekness, and self-effacement suggest only weakness; whereas

HOSTILITY BETWEEN UNRELATED FAMILIES 203

less effective is the response. To some extent this is so even ⁵⁹⁶ where the reasons for delay are physical: for instance, the killer ⁵⁹⁷ is in prison, or the avenger is not yet adult. But it is said that if ⁶²⁷ an affront to honour remained unanswered over a period of ⁶⁰⁸ years after an adult unmarried avenger was available and the killer physically present in the community, then the quality of the dishonour ascribed to the family would be such that an eventual vengeance killing would not reinstate the reputation of the victim's family. For, on grounds of damaging conjectures about the personal motives for this delay, other families would be able to continue asserting the relative integrity of their own honour by denying it to the family of the victim. The case is hypothetical since there has been no instance of this kind in recent years, but it is indicative of Sarakatsani thinking on this matter.

The defence of family honour is at once an indication of family solidarity and a process which recreates it. The honour of the family, the solidarity of this group, and the mutual responsibility of its members, are correlated notions. It is true that passive solidarity does not extend to questions of vengeance where a life is demanded, but in other respects it is complete. A man may suffer physical assault for the offence of his father, brother, or son. Further, if one member of a family acts dishonourably, all the other members of the family lose honour in the eyes of the community. If a man is killed or a sister's betrothal is broken, and the family remains inactive, all its members are equally dishonoured. Since all are responsible for the actions of any one, every member is accountable to every other member. All the members of the family necessarily form a single solidary group for the protection of their common honour.

2. HOSTILITY BETWEEN UNRELATED FAMILIES

In the preceding chapters we have seen that for each individual this community is divided into the two opposite but complementary categories of kinsmen and strangers; trust marking relations in the one category, distrust in the other. Distrust prevents co-operation between shepherds who are not kinsmen or affines, and the four or five men that are necessary to manage a flock are either father and sons or a co-operative 'company' of kinsmen and relatives by marriage. Moreover, the produce of the

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619 flock is sold to persons outside the community. No Sarakatsanos
 609 who remains a member of the community acts as a trader or
 578 shopkeeper. Indeed, unrelated families are only dependent on
 one another in two significant ways, for marriage partners and
 social reputation. In both instances this form of dependence
 helps to breed hostility and suspicion, which is all the more
 intense since there are no other forms of social or economic
 co-operation. Perhaps, too, the dispersed character of the com-
 munity, and the fact that for most of the time shepherds are
 bound to the care of their animals, allow attitudes of intense
 hostility without giving too frequent opportunities for its physi-
 cal expression.

571 The hostility that exists between unrelated families is en-
 609 couraged by the belief that their interests are mutually destruc-
 578 tive. There is the story that after he had created the other
 529 countries, God had a few stones and rocks left in his sack. He
 [1973] threw these over his shoulder and they became the land of
 Greece. It is believed that there are not enough resources and
 wealth to satisfy the needs of everybody, and that therefore the
 success and prosperity of other families is necessarily a threat to
 the very existence of one's own. It follows that a man must
 rejoice when another suffers misfortune and 'falls in the mud'
 (πέφτει στὴ λάσπη). For the Sarakatsani, these beliefs have an
 immediate relevance. If the village President allots one man an
 area of good summer grass, another must receive an area of in-
 different grazing. Again, in the winter, pasture is scarce, and
 every family that has successfully negotiated for its requirements
 of winter grass leaves less for the others. Whether it is a question
 of material assets or social prestige the Sarakatsani see life as
 a kind of seesaw. If one family goes up in the world the others
 must necessarily come down.

571 The hostility between unrelated families is intimately related
 109 to the nature of rights and obligations inside the elementary
 593 family. These have a diffuse character; that is to say, a man is
 578 obliged to support his brothers, sisters, parents, or children in
 every situation and circumstance unless this assistance con-
 flicts with other and higher obligations. But not only do all a
 man's significant interests fall within the limits of the family,
 but in most contexts loyalty to the family is the supreme social
 value. Moreover, there is no social group in this community

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PATRONAGE

1. COMMUNITY

THE Sarakatsani of Zagori are profoundly conscious of their identity as a community in relation to villagers or townspeople. Hostility to villagers is not only a question of a conflict of interests but also a difference of values. The Sarakatsani believe that if the material conditions of their life are indeed regrettable, yet the moral life of their community upholds Greek traditional values which villagers, especially in Zagori, have debased and betrayed. Specifically they claim that the men may be cursed or the women seduced with little fear of provoking the reaction expected of honourable men. These claims are spiced with illustrations. The classic instance is the case of the postman who surprised another villager in the act of intercourse with his wife. He took no action, however, except to observe that this did not seem to him to be the conduct of a good neighbour. Other tales inform of homosexual practices with gipsies, and of ugly widows and unmarried spinsters who satisfy their lusts with dogs. The evidence is rather more convincing for the accusation that they are mean and inhospitable. The common purpose of these allegations is, simply, to deny that the villagers of Zagori have honour. The men are lacking in manliness, courage, and generosity: the women are shameless and given to sexual lust. Criticism is sharpened by the knowledge that the shepherds themselves are despised by the villagers as people unfit to live in civilized society, physically unclean barbarians who put their trust in violence and self-help rather than the processes of law.

In these attitudes two ideal types are opposed. For the villagers of Zagori, actions must be judged against the image of the clever, astute, educated merchant and patriot who may travel abroad but continues to support the village by his benefactions. His activities, however, require an orderly social environment, a respect for the minimum of law and order, an absence of physical violence, and (although this would not be admitted) it required in the past a qualified understanding with the Turkish master.

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master. In contrast the Sarakatsan model is the anarchic pallikari hero whose ideal is personal freedom and aggressive pride, the patriot of the kleptotic ballads, trussed with bandoliers, physically hard and morally self-disciplined. By implication such men are shepherds, not villagers; the latter, whether they live by agriculture or not, are despised as 'bent men' (σκυμμένοι άνθρωποι), men who servilely dig in the earth.

The community is a closed group: individuals are members because they were born into it. On the other hand, some people leave it through marriage to villagers; and through education or wealth where these lead to a change in occupation or the material conditions of living. In one respect, then, the Sarakatsani of Zagori are an occupational group sharing a homogeneous style of life: in another, a community practising preferential endogamy. For probably not more than 5 per cent of all Sarakatsan marriages are to persons outside the community. Significantly such marriages meet with some disapproval; and even where a man who has taken a village wife continues to live from his flocks, he is no longer considered to be a full member of the community without some qualification.

The Sarakatsani of Zagori, while they have this clear sense of their solidarity in opposition to the villagers, are nevertheless a widely dispersed community in which the only group able to act together on the basis of local community, rather than kinship ties, is the local gathering of shepherds who in summer live on the grazing lands of the same village. This gathering of families has little group consciousness and no formal organization. There are various reasons for this. A family may sometimes have ties of kinship and marriage with as many as half the families in the local gathering, but never with all. Distrust between unrelated families does not prevent the momentary upsurge of feelings of identification against villagers, but it completely cripples the co-operation that is necessary for systematic opposition. In difficulties men turn for practical help to kinsmen and affines, not to unrelated neighbours. A further reason is that the local group is dissolved in the autumn when each co-operating group moves down to its winter pastures which are seldom in the same neighbourhood. Since a family has one set of Sarakatsan neighbours in the summer and generally an entirely different set in the winter, the feeling emerges that there

COMMUNITY

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is something impermanent, almost fortuitous, about the local neighbourhood whether in summer or winter.¹ At the same time the significance and solidarity of the total Sarakatsani community is emphasized. The expression, 'we, the Sarakatsani of Zagori' is common; but 'we, the Sarakatsani of Tsepelevo' (or any other village), is heard less frequently.

Yet it is in the local neighbourhood that hostility between Sarakatsani and Zagori villagers is actively expressed. Property rights are jealously guarded, and in the absence of fencing it is inevitable that Sarakatsani sheep and mules are discovered in the crops or gardens of villagers. They trespass regularly and deliberately on certain areas of grassland reserved for the cutting of hay on which the villagers rely to feed their livestock during the winter months. The shepherds also attempt to defraud the village treasury by concealing some of their sheep when the flock is numbered each spring. For their part the Sarakatsani resent the fines they must pay in the agricultural court for the depredations committed by their animals. They believe, too, that they are cheated in the allotment of watering time by the villager who regulates the irrigation of village vegetable gardens. There are quarrels over the regulations for the grazing and watering of mules, which favour the villagers. There is trouble over the use of springs for washing clothes and over the refusal of the Sarakatsani to use earth-closets. Indeed, there is trouble between the two groups at every point of contact between them. Since their rights are entrenched by the decrees passed in the village council and because the executive administration of village affairs is necessarily in the hands of villagers who are in residence all the year, the villagers are almost always in a legally secure position in differences with Sarakatsani. It follows that the villager appeals to the law which happens to favour his interests, the Sarakatsanos more often turns to self-help and violence. Justice is not a question of the impartial administration of existing law, although this, too, may be lacking in the view of the Sarakatsani. If the law does not allow a man to protect the interests and dignity of his family, then it does not represent justice.

¹ In this connexion it is worth remarking that before the Sarakatsani became village citizens in 1938 a family, or stani, did not necessarily go to the same grazing village in Zagori each year.

SPIRITUAL KINSHIP

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On the other hand, any attempt to organize systematic co-operation between the families of the community faces almost insuperable obstacles. An 'Association of Nomad Pastoralists' was formed in 1950 to represent the interests of the community to the government and other agencies. But enthusiasm waned rapidly as soon as it was realized that it could not miraculously improve the situation without the moral and financial support of its members over a number of years. The members are almost exclusively Sarakatsani but significantly the salaried executive secretary is a villager; first, because no shepherd possesses the legal expertise to negotiate with officials; secondly, because, although few shepherds trust the secretary, it would be even more distasteful to discuss one's problems with another Sarakatsanos. Here we touch on the difficulty which faces any attempt at community organization beyond the competence of the co-operating 'company'. It necessarily involves the acceptance of some executive authority. But for reasons of pride and distrust a Sarakatsanos cannot surrender any fraction of the sovereignty of his family.

As we have seen, this does not mean that the community has no sense of its solidarity and opposition to villagers. On the contrary, when the honour of the community is publicly attacked, unrelated men will stand together in its defence. To do nothing would be to betray their manhood in one another's eyes. This is a relationship of identification. But the conflict of practical interests between Sarakatsani and the villagers, the merchants, or the government, is a different form of threat. And although these problems are similar in kind for all, the problems of one family are generally separated in time and space from those of another. When a man's own interests are not immediately endangered, he is secretly pleased about the misfortunes of other men who are not kinsmen or affines. To face these difficulties as a united community would require co-operative relationships between non-kinsmen. Since these are not possible, we must now consider how, in fact, each family attempts to protect itself from the external threats to its security and prosperity.

2. SPIRITUAL KINSHIP

In his struggle to protect his family and live his own way of life the Sarakatsanos must come to terms with various persons

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THE VALUES OF PRESTIGE¹

1. THE HIERARCHY

A CONSIDERATION of the bilateral kindred and the marriage prohibitions associated with it has shown that the only relatively enduring kin group in the Sarakatsan system of kinship and marriage is the elementary family. I have placed considerable emphasis on the concentration of most of the individual's significant obligations within this group; and these normally take precedence over any other moral commitments. It is a feature of evident importance that the community is fragmented into about six hundred of these exclusive corporate family groups. 594

Within the community these families are jurally autonomous. It is true that they must often co-operate with kinsmen or affines in the management of their sheep. And in particular though rare circumstances when the honour of the community is in question, men who are unrelated may stand together against villagers and others. Nevertheless, in none of these situations is the sovereignty of the family compromised. Moreover, unrelated families see their different interests as being in fundamental and inevitable opposition. We have already examined various attitudes and institutions through which this mutual hostility is expressed, for instance attitudes of intense secrecy and distrust, and institutions of sheep-theft and mutual trespass. Hostility directed outwards is, of course, the counterpart of the immensely strong jural and affective solidarity of the family. And both are conditions consistent with the system 594
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¹ In some respects there are obvious parallels with Homeric society, and I have benefited by the work of Sir Maurice Bowra, *Tradition and Design in the Iliad*, Oxford, 1930; Bruno Snell, *The Discovery of the Mind*, translated by Rosenmeyer, Oxford, 1953; M. I. Finley, *The World of Odysseus*, London, 1956; and Arthur W. H. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility*, Oxford, 1960. 577
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Anybody considering the values of a Mediterranean culture is under an obligation to J. A. Pitt-Rivers, *People of the Sierra*, London, 1954. Bichr Farès, *L'Honneur chez les Arabes avant L'Islam*, Paris, 1932, is an interesting attempt to discuss a somewhat similar system of values on strict principles of Durkheimian sociology.

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of patronage that links each family individually to the wider structure of Greek society.

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But, clearly, there is a limit to the amount of openly expressed hostility that this community is able to tolerate. Shepherds and their sheep are vulnerable, and in practice prudence discourages the free expression of hostility. The reciprocal trespass practised by shepherds who share a common grazing boundary is generally confined to areas from which there is a secure line of retreat; and in grazing disputes shepherds are careful to fight with weapons which may cause unpleasant wounds but are unlikely to kill. Wanton murders are discouraged through the removal of the killer by imprisonment, voluntary exile, or vengeance. By whatever agency this may occur, the family is too small a group to afford the loss of a man, and only an imperative obligation of honour justifies such a risk.

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But this relatively limited display of active hostility is not in balance with the unequivocal character of the oppositions between families unrelated by kinship or marriage. These find a more extended and satisfactory expression in competitive behaviour and values which have been mentioned so frequently. The sociological importance of competition^{*} is precisely that it represents a kind of opposition which is often indirect. In this instance protagonists compete for social prestige, that is for something which in material form none of them possesses. Where the prize has this intangible quality, direct attack may be irrelevant. Indeed, since social prestige requires the favourable response of the community to a man's qualities and actions after these have been evaluated in terms of the accepted system of values, it depends overwhelmingly on the opinions of enemies. To oppose successfully other unrelated families in terms of prestige, men must compete to the limit in their adherence to these values. They do this without causing one another obvious material harm; and the more they oppose one another in this way, the more they affirm their support of a particular system of values and beliefs. In this context competition for social prestige, while it clearly encourages that family particularism of which it is itself a symptom, nevertheless gives to this competitive complex a certain unity and coherence through a common system of values. These are, as it were, the rules of the game.

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* Georg Simmel, *Conflict*, translated by Wolff, Glencoe, Illinois, 1955, p. 57.

THE HIERARCHY

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It may be agreed (and, in general, correctly) that in a system where a number of groups compete for prestige, a strong group, if it is denied the social recognition it expects, may in frustration turn from competitive action to direct violence and attempt to establish its superiority by force; or it may attempt other forms of direct opposition, perhaps through the use of economic power. But in relation to the Sarakatsan community the family is small and weak. Its inability to make alliances outside the kindreds of its members and their affinal connexions, and the physical dispersion of the Sarakatsani which restricts the activities of any family to only a small area of the total community, are other factors which would tend to prevent a family group and its allies from dominating the remainder of the community; even if we leave aside the certainty of State intervention if violence were used or threatened. Economic or political control of the community by one family and its allies is equally unlikely. Unrelated families do not co-operate to market their produce and consequently there are no co-operative institutions whose officers might manoeuvre themselves into positions of economic dominance. Similarly, the community has no institutions of local government which the members of a family and its kinsmen might infiltrate in the attempt to establish a form of political control. The pathetic showing of the Association of Nomad Pastoralists illustrates the concern of all families to prevent the delegation of any effective representative power to others. Each family faces the total community in a condition of dependence. The position it is able to occupy in public life, the quality of the marriage alliances it establishes, depend entirely on its social prestige, that is, they depend on the favourable response of enemies; or more accurately, on the inability of enemies effectively to denigrate a family's reputation.

Prestige (γ6ητσο) and 'name' concern the Sarakatsani in every context of public action. 'Better to lose your eye than your name', runs the common proverb. This intense competition of families to maintain their prestige against the permanent threat of denigration, and the continual evaluation of other people's conduct, which is fed by an insatiate and hostile curiosity, result in a certain hierarchical ordering of Sarakatsan family groups. In the local gathering of families which share the

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THE VALUES OF PRESTIGE

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In the local gathering of families which share the pastures of the same summer village the hierarchy of prestige is based upon a fairly precise knowledge of the genealogy, wealth, moral character, and conduct of each family; but, in the wider ordering of social reputations in the total community, elements of prejudice and speculation play a greater part.

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In either case, there is more general agreement about the ordering of families at the two extremes, which define the hierarchy, than in its middle reaches. A number of families with the surname of 'Taoumanis' by their wealth and descent from a few dominating personalities of the past three generations are generally recognized to be the leading families of the community; these are the families of 'first lineage'. And certain of the families who bear such names as 'Tangas', 'Myriounis', and 'Ferendinos' might be associated with them. On the other hand, families with the names of 'Sultanos' or 'Pistiolis' are assigned by general opinion to the lowest grade of social reputation; for them, indeed, social prestige does not properly exist. For the most part these families are economically poor and their genealogies lack any mark of distinction.

The positions at either end of the hierarchy are not only more clearly defined, they also possess a fixity that is absent elsewhere. A family with the surname 'Pistiolis' possesses large flocks yet it remains a family of the 'lowest lineage'. Its daughters are virtuous but their hands have not yet been sought in marriage even by men of indifferent social standing. However closely such families may live in the spirit of the community's values others do not give them the just recognition of their merits, so that certain of their number lose heart and are no longer concerned to act honourably; for in their case virtue is not its own reward. And the evidence of this reaction supports the original evaluation of the community.

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If it is scarcely possible for such a family to gain prestige, it is at least difficult for the leading families of the community to lose theirs. There are few instances where a member of a family of the highest lineage has failed in a 'question of honour'. If a man is naturally timid he finds it all the more difficult to resist the immense moral pressure of family and community to act as he is expected to act. At the same time membership of a leading family in itself protects the individual from gratuitous slights. It is true that if a family of wealth and high lineage

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121 the other and vice versa, which any geometric figure is powerless to represent.

594 /124/ We use the term "conjugal family" to mean the husband and wife and their non-married offspring. (1)

(114) 1. See E. Durkheim: *La famille conjugale*, p. 2 f.
We prefer this term to that of "elementary family" proposed by Radcliffe-Brown *Introduction*, p. 6, for, as Durkheim correctly says, *ibid.*, p. 3, the children move away after their marriage, but the paternal family continues to exist limited to the two spouses, who constitute stable element which characterizes it.
The term "conjugal" is therefore more true to the facts.

596 The extended family comprises the oldest parental couple and their male descendants married and surrounded by their families. The young girls, as soon as they are married, leave the paternal hearth for the abode of their husband. That is how this type of family is born (2) and how this family becomes a patrilocal family.

(591) 2. According to A. Radcliffe-Brown: *Introduction*, p. 7.

591 However, it may happen, though exceptionally, that the husband of the young woman is the one to settle near his father-in-law.

474 The Tséligato is primarily a cooperative of an economic order, the nucleus of which consists of an extended family, economically powerful 612 in the sense that it has at its disposal very large flocks (some of them 596 exceed 15,000 heads of livestock). With this family a certain number of less wealthy conjugal families or extended families become associated. The associated families may be related collaterally or affinally to one another or to the principal family. However, it is equally possible that no bond of kinship unites them. In addition, it sometimes happens that shepherds without flocks attach themselves in that capacity to the Tséligato.

619 Sarakatsani society is made up of all the Sarakatsani together,

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619 integrated within their families and the Tséligato's. And the surrounding society is none other than the Hellenic society to which the Sarakatsani belongings as Greeks.

128 Some of the groups enumerated are organized. They therefore present a special aspect which we shall examine separately. Taking into account the fact that all social life involves an economic system which rests on organization, we shall examine it in connection with the latter.

Finally, social organization being inconceivable without recourse to norms, prescriptions and models for behavior, we shall conclude this part with a study of law and morality among these nomads.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE SOCIAL UNITS IN SARAKATSANI LIFE

THE CONJUGAL FAMILY

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[595] The Sarakatsani conjugal family is always based on marriage. Concubinage and other forms of union are not permitted. Since our herders depend principally on the family, it is to be expected that a system or rules and principles would be in force and be applied both to the events that create the family (obstacles to marriage, choice of future husband or wife, betrothal, marriage) as well as to the unfolding of its life (relations between spouses, daily life, children, etc.).

[128] These rules constitute so many guide points; naturally the study of the conjugal family will take these as a point of departure: their sociological evaluation will thus be carried out at the same time.

582 Marriage regulation, the kinship system and its functions.

In general, marriage follows the rules of canon law and civil law (first Byzantine, then Hellenic).

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671 However, these are not the only regulations. Marriage is likewise regulated by the customary law which derives from Sarakatsani society itself.

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671 According to canon and civil law, which applies to all Greeks,

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675 other forms of Sarakatsani group life manifests itself here in the same way: isolated shepherds and conjugal as well as extended families take on obligations to the Tséligato. The Tséligato in turn takes on obligations in favor of its constituent elements. The heads of families transfer to the Tséligato their economic functions having to do with the business of herding, and so forth. Compensation resides chiefly in the facts that have determined the creation of the Tséligato, which we enumerated at the beginning of this section.

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182 Sociological Characterization of the Tséligato.

As a specific social group, the Tséligato is midway between the extended family and the economic cooperative.

From the family it has borrowed the moral attributes that go with a family herding enterprise. From the cooperative it has taken the contractual bond uniting its members. As a result, it is better equipped than the cooperative, for, in carrying out its functions, it can appeal to moral attributes in all cases where the contractual bond is insufficient. Likewise, it is more powerful than the family, for it is in a position to make people who are not related cooperate.

It is therefore, according to the Gurvitch group typology, (55)

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55. See G. Gurvitch: La vocation, pp. 309-311.
an intermediate group between kinship and /183/ an economic affinity, of voluntary, permanent and supra-functional cooperation.

We will try to assess the role it plays in the life of our herders when we discuss the organized aspect of the latter.

619 SARAKATSANI SOCIETY AND THE SURROUNDING SOCIETY

(474) Sarakatsani society includes all the Sarakatsani. It is made up of all the Tséligatos and their subordinate group or individual elements. It is created by their distribution in space. If we wish to use the criteria of classification in social groups proposed by G. Gurvitch and based on "the extent of dispersion," we should say that

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619 it is a question of "grouping at a distance." (56)

56. Cf. G. Gurvitch Ibid p. 319-320.

The ties that unite its components are of two types.

(184) First, objective ties: the sameness of cultural armature and of the style of social life which observed in any actual Sarakatsani group.

619 Next, ties which are subjective but can be objectively comprehended:
186 the feeling, the consciousness on the part of the Sarakatsani that they
184 are "Sarakatsani," that therefore they belong to a separate, social, cultural world in the intimacy of which they communicate through marriage (kinship) and the establishment of relationships of an economic order, through expectations and interchanges of solidarity and cooperation, through common signs, signals and symbols, finally through common group values and ideas.

619 In order to give a picture of this one might say that Sarakatsani
181 society very much resembles Greece in the classical era where, in spite of the existence of separate City-States, one could find "the commonality of Greeks" * (* ελληνισμός 'Ellinismos' *), that is to say, the objective reality, Greece, which shaped all the inhabitants of the Cities in their ethnic and cultural affiliation.

619 The dominance of Sarakatsani society over its components manifests
184 itself on three levels: that of culture, it being the creative center
186 of culture the components of which are the bearers; that /184/ of
[582] cooperation and solidarity which the Sarakatsani owe each other; and that of choice of a spouse, who must always be a Sarakatsani.

619 For the rest, Sarakatsani society represents the theater of the social mobility of its members, the framework within which the Tséligatos are established and reestablished, the limits within which a Sarakatsani can move about socially in order to seek his fortune and fulfill his life. If he goes beyond this frontier he will find himself in a universe which is no longer his and which will not welcome him.

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619 Sarakatsani society does not have any organized apparatus. One
186 does not find in it any social hierarchy of Tséligatos, the latter
[474] being set apart merely by their size (hierarchy of prestige). Obviously,
one cannot speak of an over-all structure of Sarakatsani society which,
moreover, cannot be structured. From this point of view it resembles
much more a form of group identity, a "we, the Sarakatsani," than a
society strictly speaking. If one accepts this qualification one must
also accept /the fact/ that it is a passive rather than an active "we,"
therefore it is not functional, or very slightly so.

619 Compared with the Tséligato and the extended family, Sarakatsani
474 society as such takes on few functions. The latter are practically
596 limited to providing the Tséligatos with the necessary participants and
demanding of the Sarakatsani a behavior conforming to the accepted norms--
as we have seen.

[128] Thus in all, or almost all, cases in the following analysis in
which we speak of Sarakatsani society we will be referring to the most
representative social groups, the extended family and the Tséligato.

* * * *

179 The surrounding society is, as a rule, Hellenic society. If we
say "as a rule," it is because the Sarakatsani, being nomadic, often
pass through areas inhabited by Greeks in order to reach adjacent lands.

On the other hand, Hellenic society itself has experienced profound
changes throughout the ages--invasions, /185/ occupations, etc. Outsiders
have become involved in it, with serious consequences resulting on all
levels of life.

We must take into account these changes, having admitted at the out-
set the importance of the historical dimension of the phenomena we
observe. We shall not dwell on this point, however since we shall treat
it in detail in the chapter on law, to which we are purposely referring.

However, the term "surrounding society" always designates in our

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[177] analysis the broader social environments, whatever their concrete forms, into which the Sarakatsani find themselves cast at a given moment.

The relations of Sarakatsani society with surrounding society are manifold. They vary according to the nature of the latter and according to circumstances. On the national level, the Sarakatsani are integrated with other Greeks, therefore absolutely opposed to every element foreign to Hellenism. On the cultural level, there are affinities between [171] Sarakatsani and Hellenic cultures. As for the organizational apparatus of surrounding society, namely its administration, the Sarakatsani submit to it whenever they cannot avoid it. On the economic level, finally, their transactions with the outside are limited to the few which we have already discussed.

In this respect the ruling principle of Sarakatsani life is isolation. The effects of this in practice manifest themselves on several levels which we shall not fail to emphasize.

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Remarks on the Interrelations Between the Social
Units of Sarakatsani Life

Some systematic remarks on the interrelations among the social units of Sarakatsani life are necessary before we conclude this chapter.

Placing ourselves in the perspective outlined by Durkheim, (57)

57. See La famille conjugale, p. 7.

we may say that the extended family embraces two zones: the narrower one, represented by the /186/ conjugal family, and the other, broader, consisting of the extended family.

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594 The Tseligato includes several of them: one, the broadest of all, which coincides with itself; another made up of the extended families; a third in which are found the independent conjugal families, that are integrated in the Tseligatos; finally, and on occasion, a fourth represented by shepherds who join it on an individual basis.

● [319] Sarakatsani society commands a zone less defined than those of the

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619 Tseligatos and the families and therefore fluctuating, which is
474 represented by itself. /It includes as well/ A second, embracing
596 all the Tseligatos; a third /embracing/ the extended families; a fourth,
594 the conjugal families, and a fifth, the independent shepherds.

177 Surrounding society, finally, encompasses, on the one hand, the
619 non-Sarakatsani zone which is its own, and, on the other hand, the
zone of Sarakatsani society which is divided into the zones already
enumerated.

619 This arrangement into zones of the components in question leads
182 us to the dynamic aspect of their interrelations. In fact, the zones
184 we have distinguished are neither turned in upon themselves and isolated
from the others in water-tight compartments, nor always internally
homogeneous, since their composition varies. As a result, multiple
relationships of every sort, oriented in all directions can be observed
among the units, the zones and the components of the latter--relationships
that end up by weaving an inextricable web linking together or setting
up opposites between a whole and a whole, the components among themselves,
the components and their units, the units among themselves, creating,
moreover passages from one unit to the other, from one zone to the other
or to the components of another, and so on.

However, these relationships may be grouped into certain categories
according to their nature. One may distinguish direct, indirect, or
mediated relationships; others based on equality or subordination; still
others based on cooperation, of opposition or of domination. Of course,
each specific relationship may be differently qualified depending on the
angle from which it is observed, in other words, according to the frame
of reference that one adopts.

619 Thus, the conjugal family has direct relations with the extended
182 family, the latter with the Tseligato, the three with Sarakatsani society.
184 The conjugal family within the extended family has mediated relations with
596 the Tseligato through the intermediary of the extended family. The
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619 existence of the /187/ Tséligas mediates negotiation with the outside.
182 The families cooperate among themselves but are subordinated when one
184 proceeds from the conjugal to the extended family (in the same lineage),
596 and from these two to the Tséligato. The Tséligato has sovereignty over
474 the families comprising it, but identifies itself with the central
[613] core family. The families of elders predominate over those made up of
the young. The Tséligatos and the families are in opposition to
surrounding society or cooperate with it, depending on circumstances.
[197] However, most frequently, there is opposition between Sarakatsani society
and surrounding society. Depending on the situation, the Tséligatos may
compete or cooperate, and so on.

619 On the basis of these few examples corresponding merely to certain
182 possible relationships between affiliated components one may envisage
184 the very considerable role that the relationships in question can play
towards the structuralization, the continuance and the safeguarding of
the originality of Sarakatsani society and life in general.

[128] However, in view of the fact that the study of this problem pre-
supposes an analysis of certain aspects on which we have not yet touched,
we shall consider what has gone before as brief groundwork, while
reserving the full treatment for our final chapter.

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CHAPTER II

Social Organization and Economic System

619 If we accept the fact that the organization of a social group
596 consists of a previously established totality of lasting arrangements
594 functioning toward definite ends and limited in practice by specified
474 individuals who are given prerogatives and entrusted with responsibilities
inherent in their mission, we must concede at the same time that four of
the social units of Sarakatsani life are organized groups.

The conjugal family, the extended family, the Tséligato and
surrounding society have an organization the existence of which cannot

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be denied. On the other hand, Sarakatsani society does not have such an organization.

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494 As far as the families are concerned, their organization is to be found in the power of the father-head-manager or the head-manager in his responsibilities, in the functions, rights and obligations of the family members, in the hierarchy of sub-groups their functions, etc.

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(615) As for the Tséligato, its organization consists of agreements made between the participants; it is completed by that of the central family.

(177) The administrative apparatus of surrounding society, finally, constitutes the organization of this society.

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(182) The relations between these different organizations reflect the relationship between the corresponding units.

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494 In all these instances one may note the constraint that the organization exerts on the corresponding group, as well as the constraint that one organization exerts on another, at least in part, starting with that of the surrounding society upon the Tséligato and the extended families, and that of the extended family upon the conjugal family.

(591) This interplay is derived from conditions and regulations applicable to individuals or groups /190/ permanently established from which a person cannot stand apart with impunity and which dictate and inspire roles and conduct of individuals and groups.

The effect of the existence of organization among the purely Sarakatsani groups are very important. They are felt in connection with the efficient fulfillment of social or economic functions. If the Tséligato succeeds, as we have noted, in making its members cooperate whenever a family by itself would fail, this is due precisely to its organization. And if the extended family may be assured of smooth interior functioning despite the number, nature and oppositions of its individual or group component, this is in large part due to its organization.

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[554] takes the bare shoulderblade and, examining the multiformed spots of the marrow made visible by the cooking and irregularities of the bone, announces the portents. The drawing, no. 102, shows the marks and their meaning.

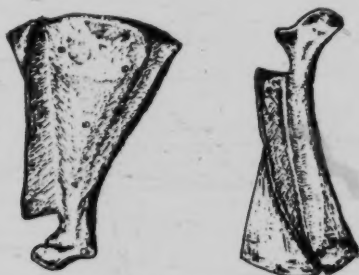


Fig. 102

Foretelling the future on the basis of the shoulderblade.

1. Future law-suit.--2. Paying out or taking in.--3. Arrest.--
4. Death (man-woman).--5. Enemy.--6. War.--7. Encirclement by bandits.

619 /285/ The portents have to do with the life of individuals, the family, the group and even national life--facts which show once again how much the Sarakatsani feels himself to be integrated in his nation.

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171 Divination by the shoulderblade is practiced in all of continental Greece. It seems that its roots go far back in time. According to Professor G. Megas, divination is bound up with the mysteries of Mithra and was introduced from Egypt into Greece. (93)

93. G. Megas: *Recherches sur l'Égyptologie*, p. 12.

It is found in Byzantium and among numerous peoples (94)

94. N. BOATHE: *Antiquities of the Jews*, T. A', p. 78.

Let us cite also a special study on M. VRAAOE